

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 00798 110831Z

12

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 CAB-02 DODE-00 DOTE-00 FAA-00 OC-05

CCO-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 SAM-01 /050 W

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R 110706Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1705

INFO FAA BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11762: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, PO

SUBJ: AIR CONTROLLERS THREATEN AIRPORT STOPPAGES

REF: (A) STATE 4596 (NOTAL)

(B) LISBON 154

SUMMARY: AIR CONTROLLERS THREATEN TWO-HOUR DAILY SUSPENSION
AT PORTUGUESE AIRPORTS STARTING FEBRUARY 20 UNLESS DEMANDS
MET. END SUMMARY.

1. RESTRICTION ON USE OF PORTUGUESE AIR SPACE (REFTELS) CONTINUES
AS GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET FULLY MET DEMANDS OF AIR CONTROLLERS.
CONTROLLERS HAVE NOW ANNOUNCED THAT STARTING FEBRUARY 20 THEY
WILL NOT PERFORM DUTIES DEALING WITH LANDINGS AND TAKE-OFFS
FOR TWO HOURS DAILY (12 NOON TO 2 P.M.), WITH PERIOD TO
INCREASE ONE HOUR EACH WEEK THEIR DEMANDS NOT MET.
SUSPENSIONS APPLY TO AIRPORTS AT LISBON, OPORTO, FARO, SANTA
MARIA, PONTA DELGADA, HORTA, FLORES, PORTO SANTO AND FUNCHAL.

2. PARTIAL SUSPENSION IS SAME METHOD USED LAST FALL BY EMPLOYEES
OF FOREIGN AIRLINES AT LISBON. IN JUSTIFICATION OF ORIGINAL NOTAM
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OF TRAFFIC RESTRICTION CONTROLLERS CITED INSUFFICIENT PRESENT

CAPACITY OF SYSTEM, POOR WORK CONDITIONS, AND INSUFFICIENT PAY. THEY SAID THEIR ACTION TAKEN TO OBTAIN SYSTEMATIC PROCEDURES; FORCE DGAC TO IMPOSE SCHEDULE CHANGES ON AIRLINES TO MORE EVENLY DISTRIBUTE TRAFFIC; AVOID REPETITION OF RECENT "DANGEROUS INCIDENTS"; AND TO ALERT GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE. HOWEVER, LOCAL PANAM OFFICIAL BELIEVES MAIN ISSUE IS MONEY.

3. GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SLOW TO RESPOND TO SITUATION. RESULTS OF STUDY COMMISSION WHICH HELD HEARINGS FROM JANUARY 13-16 ONLY PUBLISHED ON FEBRUARY 5. COMMISSION REPORT SAID MANY TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WOULD BE SOLVED BY PUBLICATION OF NEW "STATUTE OF CONTROLLERS," AND WARNED OF REPERCUSSIONS ON OTHER SECTORS OF AIR TRANSPORT BY GIVING IN TO CONTROLLERS' UNILATERAL DEMANDS.

4. COMMENT: EFFECTS OF AIR TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS HAVE BEEN MOSTLY MINIMAL, WITH ONLY A FEW DELAYS OF UP TO ONE OR TWO HOURS. HOWEVER, CONTROLLERS SEEM DETERMINED TO CARRY OUT NEW THREAT, WHICH WOULD CERTAINLY CAUSE MORE SERIOUS DISLOCATIONS. AS IN OTHER PAST DISPUTES, GOP WILL PROBABLY MADE DECISIVE MOVE ONLY WHEN SITUATION REACHES REAL CRUNCH. CARLUCCI

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